NARRATIVE

OF THE EARLY

EVENTS OF THE REBELLION

IN

UPPER CANADA,

WITH

OBSERVATIONS ON THE POLITICAL STATE OF AMERICA,

BEING EXTRACTS OF LETTERS FROM

MR. WILLIAM COPLAND,

FORMERLY A NORFOLK YEOMAN, NOW A RESIDENT AT TORONTO.

HOLT:

Printed by James Shalders;

AND SOLD BY MESSRS. LONGMAN AND CO., PATERNOSTER-ROW, LONDON,

AND ALL THE PRINCIPAL BOOKSELLERS IN NORFOLK.

1838.

NARRATIVE

OF

EVENTS IN UPPER CANADA.

TORONTO, UPPER CANADA,
DECEMBER 26, 1837.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

YOU have no doubt heard and read of the rebellion, which broke out in Lower Canada in the autumn, and which is still going on. Several severe engagements have taken place lately, and there was a rumour last Saturday that three thousand of the rebels had laid down their arms in one place; but this is not confirmed. We, however, have had enough to think about in Upper Canada since the revolt in the lower province, which event has been the cause of our present calamitous situation. I remember, when at your house a few weeks before I left England, on my mentioning my intention of making Canada my adopted country, you asked me if I had seen the account Mr. Makensie had given of the state of that country, and the gross misgovernment and oppression which existed there; and you added, "Depend

upon it you will have to fight for your liberty before two years are expired." Events have realized this prediction, though not so soon as you expected ; but our liberty has been endangered by this very man (who took a journey to London to complain of the government) and his tools. I will now, however, enter into the details of this affair. I am afraid you will think that I have changed my principles, but this is not the case : I am as ardent a friend to liberty as ever, and would go all reasonable lengths to obtain and secure it ; but I must first feel that the country generally is oppressed, before I would in any way assist in changing the government by a civil war.

A short time after the rebellion broke out in Lower Canada, the commander of the forces, Sir J. Colborne, our former governor, wrote to Sir F. Head to know how many troops he could spare, in case he should stand in need of their assistance. Sir Francis said, he could spare all, as he had the utmost confidence in the loyalty of the people generally, if any tumult arose. Accordingly *every soldier* was sent out of Upper Canada, except four old men unfit for service, who remained to *guard the garrison and magazine.* Makensie (who in his weekly paper had been constantly publishing the most seditious and treasonable articles, and corresponding with persons throughout the province as to the best means of upsetting the government), thought, now the soldiers were gone, and not *even a militia organized,* that this was the opportunity for him to make an open and bold attempt, and accordingly he began his operations in earnest. His first step was to proceed into the

several districts and raise bodies of men: he organized them into companies with a captain over each, trained them by old soldiers in military manœuvres, and practised them in the use of the rifle by firing at marks. In his speeches he generally stated, that they could at any hour take the garrison and capture the town.

Things went on in this way for some weeks, but no notice was taken of it by the government, which seemed totally blind to the danger that every one else saw and feared. I should have said, that when the troops were sent away, 2000 stands of arms were brought to Toronto; but instead of their being put into the hands of volunteers, on whom dependance might be placed, they were laid up in the city-hall and not even unpacked. Applications were frequently made to the governor either to arm volunteers or call out the militia, but to no effect. Makensie took courage, and told his followers that Sir Francis dared not to arm the militia, as he knew they would fight against him; and that he could take the arms any night, as they had only five men to guard them, which was the case. So openly and impudently did this man form his plans, and excite the people to open revolt, that general alarm spread through the city and country. I was certain an attack would be made, and that at no distant time, but it came rather sooner than I expected.

On Monday, Dec. 4, I met a gentleman of my acquaintance, a magistrate, resident about twenty miles from Toronto; and he said he came to town expressly for the purpose of informing the governor of the state of things in his district, and that he

would not return home unless some protection was afforded. Another magistrate came for the same purpose; but Sir Francis told them not to be alarmed, as he felt sure there was no danger. This was at about four o'clock in the afternoon: when I parted with him he said—"Mr. Copland, depend upon it the rebels will attack this city some day this week." I went home in not very good spirits, as I was equally certain that such a thing would occur; and as my house and premises lie in the direct route the rebels would take in marching into the city, it was no very pleasing anticipation. We talked over the matter in the family; and Charles, who knows as much of the country as any one, said he would never go to bed any more without having his arms ready loaded. My sons proceeded immediately to cast bullets for their rifles and pistols, and at about ten went to bed.

At about twelve o'clock, I was awakened by the report of two guns, fired in a wood in front of my house: I listened some time, but could hear nothing more, and went to sleep. At about half-past one, however, I was called up by a neighbour, who said that the rebels had got into the city, and had killed one gentleman on the road. We all soon got up, and William and Charles took their arms, and went as far as the toll-gate (about a quarter of a mile distant) to hear whether the account was correct. Fortunately it was not, for had they got into the city all would have been up with us. They had halted about three miles from the town; and Colonel Moodie, who lives near Mr. John Barwick, who was coming thither, was

shot in passing them. Three of the cowardly villains fired at him with rifles, and all took effect. He died the next day. You may suppose we felt a little alarmed at the prospect of having, perhaps in an hour's time, 500 as blood-thirsty ruffians as ever lived about our house. I thought no time was to be lost; and as soon as we knew the road was clear, we packed up our plate and such other things as we could carry on foot, buried my account-books in the garden, went off to town, and took refuge in my brother-in-law's house.

The governor was called out of bed, and for the first time began to think it might prove a serious affair. I went to the city-hall, where they were arming; and a pretty scene of confusion was there. Preparations for defence were begun at about ten at night, while the rebels, amounting to six hundred, armed with rifles and pikes, were within an hour's march of the city, and hundreds of their friends in it ready to receive them. By day-break about two hundred persons were armed and sworn in as special constables, and at about ten it was determined to go out to meet the enemy. Charles and William were amongst them, and I thought it was like going to be butchered. This purpose was, however, deferred till more force was collected and the city protected, where, in my opinion, the most danger was to be apprehended had an attack been made from without.

In the course of the day, the governor wrote to two gentlemen who were lately of his executive council (whose resignation made much noise at the time), to request they would bear a flag of truce to

the rebel-leaders, and beg of them to lay down their arms, to prevent the effusion of blood and loss of life which must otherwise happen. Makensie replied, that he would come to no terms unless a convention were agreed to, which should be empowered to settle all differences, and make a total revision of the government. This Sir Francis could not listen to, and preparations proceeded on both sides.

On the Tuesday evening the attack was to be made, and at about seven o'clock about three hundred of the rebels marched towards the city. They got as far as my house, where they were met by a gentleman who was not aware of their approach. The leader fired at him and missed: he returned the fire and missed also; but the horse on which the rebel-leader was mounted took fright at the firing, reared up, and threw his rider. His neck was broken, and he died on the spot. This circumstance threw the army into disorder: they retired that night, and it is the opinion of myself and many others that it was this apparently trifling event which saved the city. At about ten o'clock, another body of the rebels amounting to about 200 marched down, and got within half a mile of the city, where they were met by a patrole of 10 men: the patrole fired, killed one man, and wounded one or two more: the rebels also fired, but did no mischief; and supposing a large force was at hand, this party also remained quiet all night.

All Wednesday was spent in making further preparations on both sides; and it was decided by the council, that, should the rebels make no move-

ment, they should be attacked on Thursday morning. The morning arrived: rumours of a movement were afloat; but as no demonstration of the kind appeared, our forces (all volunteers) were collected together, and formed into companies to march out and give the enemy battle. It was a beautiful morning, clear and frosty; and every man was in high glee at the prospect of coming to something like a trial of strength. Better than a thousand men were mustered, and the remainder of those in arms were left to protect the city under the command of the mayor—a very necessary precaution as the sequel proved. I was amongst the latter; but I could not avoid marching out with the troops as far as my house, whither I had not been able to go since I left it on the Monday night.

The rebels were in possession of a very large tavern about three miles further on, as well as all the other buildings which could afford them shelter to fire from. I waited till they began firing. The first opening of the engagement was from one of our field-pieces, a nine pounder, at the tavern of which they were in possession. The tremendous echo of the report, as it rolled through the forest, seemed to alarm the very trees at such an intrusion on their peaceful solitude. As soon as the enemy found that our cannon were likely to batter the house about their ears, they quitted it after a few discharges of their rifles. They took to the woods, which were not more than three hundred yards distant, and then a tremendous fire of musketry and rifles took place, and I thought that 100

at least must have fallen, Our cannon were now brought to bear with grape and canister shot, which made them run as fast as their legs would allow them through the woods and swamps, like a fox before the Norfolk fox-hounds.

The leaders, Makensie and Gibson, fled away up the street, the latter taking with him all the prisoners they held before the engagement. William was in the company ordered to follow under Captain Jarvis, which pursued them till they came within a hundred yards; but they dared not fire, lest they should kill the prisoners. Gibson, however, finding he could not much longer hold them said—"Gentlemen, I shall not detain you: you may go." They soon joined the company, and a cordial meeting took place. The rebels then dispersed into the thickest of the woods and swamps, where no army could follow or see them; and the pursuit was consequently given up. A good many prisoners were taken, but not one of the leaders; and Sir Francis immediately offered a reward of £1000 for Makensie, and £500 each for five more; but although parties were sent out in all directions, both cavalry and infantry, not one of them have yet been taken. Makensie got over to Buffalo in the States in women's clothes, but more of him by and by.

The army were so disappointed at not being able to bring the rebels to a regular engagement, that they could not be restrained, from seting fire to the tavern, stables, sheds, and hay, and indeed every thing that would burn; and such a conflagration has been seldom seen. It was an immense building, capable of accommodating 200

men, and stabling enough for 100 horses, with sheds for waggons, &c. all built of pine-wood, the material commonly used in this country: you may, therefore, form some idea of the blaze it made. The governor pardoned all the prisoners on the spot, and told them to go home to their families, and live peaceably in future; and right glad were they to get away. It was not, however, good policy to do so; but Sir Francis did not then know the extent of the plot. This has since been developed, and has caused him to change his mode of dealing with those who are taken in arms, or are known to have been so. It is almost miraculous, that in all this firing we did not lose *one man,* and had only about 3 slightly wounded. The rebels had about 37 killed, but how many wounded is not known, as they crawled away, and no doubt many died in the woods. Thus ended the first day's campaign, and the army was ordered to return to the city.

I must now refer back to the time when I heard the first fire, and when I returned to Toronto. I had not reached the city, when I saw an immense fire at the lower end; and a person informed me that a body of the rebels had attacked the city, had fired the bridge and one or two large houses, and were going through the streets burning as they went. I soon joined the company, and we marched down to attack the enemy. They thought that all the troops had left the city, and this body was ordered to attack it when they heard the firing of the soldiers who went out. When, however, they saw us, they retreated after a few discharges of their rifles, by which we had

one killed and one wounded. They had already destroyed property to the amount of £2000, and it was their intention to fire the city in every direction. I am surprised that this was not effected, as I know so many in the city who would have been glad to have seen it. Towards evening the whole army returned, but remained under arms all night. My sons got no rest from the Monday morning about one o'clock, till Friday night.

On the Friday news arrived, by a dispatch to the governor, that a rising had taken place in the London district; and that a Dr. Duncombe, who figured away in England last summer, had 500 men in arms, and was proceeding to meet Makensie at Toronto. My son John happened to be staying in that neighbourhood, where his uncle Cloudesley Brereton lives; and as soon as they heard of the state of the city, they raised a body of volunteers and marched off to Hamilton, intending to take the steam-boat from thence to Toronto. When they reached Hamilton, however, they found that Colonel M'Nab had been sent from Toronto to proceed to London, and meet the rebels on their own ground. John and his uncle immediately joined his company. They had to march 50 miles, which, in this country and at this season of the year, is no joke, particularly as no beds were to be had. They lodged in churches, meeting-houses, or any house, stable, or barn that could be met with; and they had a very bad commissary to supply them with provisions.

On coming within five miles of the enemy, they found that Duncombe, and some other leaders, had from five to six hundred men ready to

meet them. Accordingly the following day they proceeded to give them battle; but the rifle and pike men did not like the appearance of the muskets and bayonets, with which our volunteers were armed. They soon took to the woods; but a party of Indians were sent to dislodge them, which they soon effected, and Duncombe and his *brave* captains took flight. The greater part of the force were taken prisoners, and the remainder dispersed in every direction. Thus ended the second engagement, and, like the first, without the loss of one man killed. Many people of considerable property are among the prisoners.

During all this time arrests were making every day in Toronto of suspected persons, and houses searched, in some of which many arms were found ready for service, had Makensie got into the city. The number of prisoners which were brought in every day and almost every hour, was so great, that the civil authorities could not dispose of the cases for many days after they were apprehended; and a special commission was appointed to enquire into all the cases of those who were committed on their first examination, to liberate some on bail, and to discharge those who were not deeply implicated. Up to last Monday, Christmas-day, 110 were fully committed to take their trial on a charge of high treason, and this in Toronto alone. In Hamilton there are a great many also.

I mentioned Makensie's escape to Buffalo, in a former part of this letter. As soon as he arrived there, he began to excite the inhabitants to take part with him, in *freeing the oppressed Canadians.* He called public meetings, at which he harangued

the Yankees, whose sympathy in his cause was unbounded. Many very wealthy men joined him, and the mob were all alive at the idea of capturing Canada, especially as Makensie in his proclamation had promised 300 acres of land to all those who would join his standard. The sheriff of the Niagara district went over to Buffalo, to know if the authorities would give up Makensie; but the mayor advised him to get out of the city as quickly as possible, as he had *no power* to protect him from the populace.

After a few days, in which Makensie and others, Yankees, had been inciting the people to arms, a large number joined him; and America, being a free country, the mob thought proper to make free with the government-arms at Buffalo. They broke into the arsenal and took about 300 stands. The authorities could do nothing to prevent it, for *vox populi vox Dei* is their motto, and a pretty illustration of this they have given us. After this outrage, however, the mayor thought it might assume rather too serious an aspect, and requested Mr. Makensie to leave Buffalo; at the same time the greatest sympathy was expressed for him and the cause he had espoused, in which all the public journals at Buffalo joined.

Makensie, followed by some hundreds from Buffalo, with arms and ammunition in abundance, took possession of a small island belonging to Canada, about two miles and a half above the falls of Niagara. There they are at this time, hundreds more of the Yankees having joined him; and he has added to his force nine pieces of cannon obtained from the States, either given or

stolen from the government-stores: the latter is generally supposed to be the case. This assistance from the offscouring of the Yankees was not anticipated by our government, nor indeed by hardly any one else; and stronger measures were deemed necessary to capture, if possible, the projector of a scheme, which might (if not promptly disavowed by the president, or other steps taken to prevent its going on) involve America in a war with England. The governor immediately sent an express to Washington, to inform the president through our ambassador what was going on, and to get a proper understanding from the government regarding the course they meant to pursue.

In the mean time we are taking every means to strengthen our frontier. About 500 volunteers went from Toronto on Christmas-day, my two sons Charles and John being amongst them; and they are now at Chippewa, a village directly opposite Navy Island, where the rebels are. The force consists of about 3000 volunteers, with field-pieces, cannon, mortars, and rockets. Nothing, however, has as yet been done by our troops; for the island is so situated that it cannot be approached safely except on one point, owing to the rapids which lie above the falls, as the least error in navigating the stream, which runs seven miles and a half per hour, might carry a vessel down the falls, 176 feet. Makensie's party, however, have been amusing themselves with practising their cannon at our army, but no lives have been lost at present. They shot the hind legs off a horse in the mail; and one shot went through a house where several persons were, but did no injury.

Our men have been making breast-works, &c. to protect themselves. The governor went over yesterday, after opening the sessions of parliament with a long and able speech. I have been informed that no attack is to made by our army, until Sir Francis has received a reply to his despatch to the president, which cannot arrive before the beginning of next week.

Dec. 30.—I have just learned, that the governor of the state of New York has issued a proclamation, the object of which is to put a stop to the Americans arming to assist the rebels in Canada; and also that he is actually gone to Buffalo, to call out the militia, to arrest all persons who may be engaged in such an enterprize. This will bring the question to an issue, as far as the government is concerned; but I much doubt whether he *can enforce any law*, no matter how just or clear it may be. The fact is, that the mob rules in the states. This cannot be denied; for we have had too many instances of it, both in the wanton destruction of property and the sacrifice of lives, in cases wherein no enquiry has ever been made by the civil authorities. These authorities hold all their places at the will of the mob; and, as a necessary consequence, pander to their base passions, and lend their official influence in stifling all enquiry into cases, in which their *masters* are concerned.

I was once a republican in *principle*; that is, I always thought the theoretical part of the American government was the most perfect: I am now, however, quite satisfied, both from what I have read and seen of the States, that they are not so well governed as is generally supposed—I mean as

regards the protection of life and property, as well as the expression of opinion. It is not safe for any one to avow sentiments publicly, who is resident in the States, should such sentiments be opposed to the popular opinion: persecution in some way or other is sure to follow. Not so here: we can say and do as we please, without injury to ourselves, provided we do not injure our neighbours. We have all the advantage of good government and without paying for it, more than a nominal payment; for if a farmer, who owns 200 acres of land, can have security and protection by law for about fifteen shillings per annum, I think it may be called a nominal payment. Nor are there any imposts in any other shape—when that is paid all is paid. Tea, I believe, is the principal article taxed indirectly; but we get the best green tea at from three shillings to three and ninepence per pound. Brandy, the best, eight shillings per gallon, wine the same, and whiskey two shillings to two and three-pence.

Yet with all this exemption from real evils, the country has been torn and divided about imaginary ones; such as an elective legislative council, and *responsible* advisers to the governor in his executive council. These questions not one in a hundred of Makensie's followers know any more about than the oxen they drive. These are, however, the points which the leaders pretend to have been contending for; but, in reality they have been struggling for power, hoping to establish a republic with themselves at the head. I trust now that their designs will be thwarted; but I do not consider ourselves safe yet; for should the Ameri-

cans land 4 or 5000 men on our shore, we shall have some bloody work, and the season is terrible for a campaign. The frost has not yet been severe, though you perhaps would think it so: our bay to be sure is frozen over and horses and loaded carriages pass over it; but it is not yet *three feet* thick as it is generally, and most likely will be again when the new year is in. It is dreadful work to lie on boards or in stables in such weather, with nothing but cold water to drink; and be obliged to roast what little hard beef can be got on the bayonet. The men, however, bear all these privations with great fortitude, although quite unused to them.

Dec. 31.—This is the last day in the year, and my son John has just arrived from the camp, having got a pass from the commander for three days. He tells us that Makensie has now more than 1000 men, Yankees, and 9 or 10 pieces of artillery: they have fired more than 70 rounds at our people; and although not more than half a mile distant, they have killed no one. Our men are quite impatient to attack him, as are also the Indians. There are about 300 of the latter with our force, who insist on being allowed to be the first in surrounding the island with their canoes and boats.

On Friday night, the 29th, a circumstance occurred which has given rise to some uneasiness, lest it should give the American government a handle to act against us. A large steam-boat belonging to the Yankees had been bought by Makensie and a General Van Ranseler, son of a veteran general in the States, and a bond given in

payment to the amount of £6000. This boat has been employed in carrying provisions, arms, and ammunition to Navy Island from Buffalo, for the use of Makensie and his Yankee followers. On the Friday, she brought him a cannon, a twenty-four pounder, which our troops seeing did not much not relish. No orders, however, were given by the commander of the forces to take any notice of it. A Captain Drew, formerly in the British Navy, who now lives in the London district, got a number of men as volunteers, determined to cut the steam-boat out, and send her where she should do no more harm. Accordingly in the middle of the night, they took to their boats and proceeded on this dangerous enterprise. The steam-boat laid by a wharf on the *American shore.* They rowed up to her, and a sentinel on guard in the boat shot at one of our men, and wounded him: he returned the fire with his pistol, and killed the sentinel. They then got on board and took two men prisoners, cut her out from the wharf, set fire to her, and sent her adrift on the rapids, and ultimately down the Niagara falls.

It is said by the Yankees, that there were 15 men in her hid up. The captain escaped to tell the tale, and a pretty stir it has made along the whole line of coast from Buffalo to Young's Town. At Buffalo, they began to arm directly, and also at Lewiston; and an order was sent from the mayor of the latter place to the keeper of the fort at Young's Town, to send all the arms they had, to arm their men to take vengeance on the Canadians for this outrage. This demand, however, was refused; and I hope Jonathan will let

his courage evaporate a little, before he puts his threat into execution. If this act be a breach of the law of nations, the boat belonged to those who openly avowed their object in employing her; viz. to bring arms, ammunition, and provisions into British possessions, in order to assist in upsetting the government. I am sorry it was done, as it may possibly give rise to a dispute between the government of the states and our own. I am by no means sorry, however, for the fate of those who suffered; and the most respectable and influential American papers condemn the conduct of their countrymen, for assisting in such an unnatural rebellion.

Sir F. Head went over to the army of Chippewa and the falls as soon as the news arrived, and is now waiting there the arrival of the Governor of the state of New York, to confer with him on this important business. Immediately after the attack on and destruction of their steamboat, the men who had charge of the fort opposite Niagara turned their guns on the town, and it was said intended to blow it to atoms. No demonstration, however, of this kind has yet been made; but it alarmed the inhabitants so as to make them quit their houses for a time. We are now anxiously waiting the arrival of the steamboat to morrow, in the hope that it will bring intelligence of an amicable interview with the two governors. It is said that 3000 Yankees had risen at Detroit, about 300 miles higher west than Buffalo; and meditated an attack on our frontier opposite, which is nearly unprotected. We have, however, a large body of Indians not far off, and

they will enjoy a meeting with the Yankees, whom they cordially hate. Woe be to those who should fall into their hands.

Charles has been with the army all the time, and William and John join them to-morrow again. Should an attack on Navy Island be determined on, it will be a terrible scene; as, there being no escape, both parties *must fight* for their lives. I little expected when I left England that I should have to witness such scenes as have occurred, or that my family would have to bear arms in a civil war. We are however now in it, and must do the best we can. Should it lead to a war with the States-government, I know not how we shall fare, as their numbers so far exceed what we can raise; but I feel certain they could not conquer so as to *hold* Canada permanently. The misfortune is we cannot get any troops from England before next June, and there must be plenty of fighting long before that time in the event of a war: but I think the States will not engage in a war with England on frivolous grounds, as there is so much dissatisfaction existing amongst her own people, particularly between the northern and southern states.

I shall now break off again, and wait till further news arrive. I have read your packet of papers, and have forwarded some to you. You may tell the editors of several of your reform-papers that they are totally ignorant of the state of Upper Canada, both as regards the government and the people. I see they get their information from such papers as Makensie's and his adherents in the States; but you must read other journals in the

States to get a fair view of the question. I should be very sorry to exchange governments with them. You may rely upon it, that mankind must be much more wise, and virtuous too, before republican institutions *can* work well; and could you see and hear the middle and lower classes in the States, which in effect controul the government, you would think so too. I feel satisfied that we have, in Upper Canada, sufficient intelligence and public spirit to prevent *any governor* from ruling in an arbitrary or tyrannical manner; and as regards our present governor, he has not shown the disposition to do so in *any one* act since his arrival here.

Jan. 8.—You will see, by some papers which I have forwarded, the correspondence between our commander at Chippewa and the marshal of the state of New York. The latter requested three or four days to elapse, before an attack on the island should be made by our troops; and in the meanwhile he would use his *authority* to get back all the arms and ammunition, which the rebels and Yankees had *stolen* from the forts and arsenals in the States. This was agreed to, from the anxious wish to spare the lives of our volunteers, who were impatient at being detained so long without making an attack. The result has proved, as I expected, that he had no power to enforce the law, although that law is admitted by all the Americans. Instead of giving up their stolen arms and quitting the island, the rebels insisted on a pardon being extended to *all* who had taken arms in Canada, and on their being allowed to return *to their own homes again, without injury either*

to persons or property. What do you think of this as an example of Yankee impudence?

Sir Francis, who was then with the army, of course could never submit to such dictation, nor would the men if he had. No attack has however yet been made, except a firing upon them from our shore yesterday, when one of our guns, a twenty-four pounder, smashed one of theirs and made the wretches run. They fired on us in return, and killed one man and wounded another.

Having before mentioned the affair of cutting out the steam-boat, and sending her down the Niagara falls; I shall relate what has occurred in consequence. I was always afraid it would lead to a national quarrel, and I still see reason to apprehend it. Our commander insists on the vessel being under the same laws as a pirate-ship, and maintains the right to treat her as such. The Yankees, however, are resolute in considering the act a direct aggression on their shores; and the loss of the men, about 6 killed, as *a cold-blooded murder.* What the president and congress may think of it, we know not yet; but the governor of the state of New York has issued a proclamation, calling out the militia to repair without delay to the frontier, to prevent such aggressions and "the murder of their citizens." Large bodies of men are also forming as volunteers to land in Canada; and I suppose, after making breakfast-work of us, parcel out "our fine and fertile lands," as they call them, amongst true republicans.

I forgot to mention, that the mayor of Buffalo sent a dispatch to our commander, stating that he had received information that our troops had taken

possession of Grand Island, which lies within shot of Navy Island, and belongs to the States. Our commander replied, that no such thought was ever entertained by any of the queen's forces ; but that on the contrary, *his men had been fired upon by the Americans* from Grand Island, as they were rowing round and reconnoitring Navy Island, and that two pieces of artillery were discharged at them from the American *shore* besides, and from one of the government-forts.

Jan. 10.—I find it will be of no use my waiting any longer, as war is now likely to be too protracted for me to give you any information as regards the ultimate result. William returned home last evening on leave of absence. We learn from him, that there is no probability of our forces attacking the enemy on Navy Island, as they have intrenched themselves and fortified the place completely, and the loss of men on our side would be too great to risk such an attack. They may, therefore, retain their position as long as they please, and we must act on the defensive, and protect our frontier. A despatch, however, was received yesterday stating, that Duncombe and Dr. Rolph, two leaders of the rebel-army, had collected a large body of men at Detroit, and had passed the river and taken possession of Sandwich, about 40 miles from Toronto, and were preparing to march to that city, and liberate the prisoners, &c. We were all in a bustle on receiving this intelligence, and several companies were ordered out to meet them. This is the latest intelligence we have had. Judge Maclean, who was sent on a mission to the president at Washington, is not yet

returned; so we are quite in a state of suspense as regards the course which the American government will take.

I have not had time to make any remarks on the financial state of the country, but you may suppose we have suffered severely by the Yankee banks all stopping payment. If the subject was not too calamitous, it would be laughable to think how they have "gone a head," as they say. Many a bank in the States never had £500 capital in the world, and I do not believe one in ten will ever again pay a shilling in specie. Van Buren's system, if carried out, will play havoc with the bankers and commercial men too; but I doubt if he can do it without producing a convulsion. England must feel it as well, and indeed all the commercial world.

Feb. 17.—We are now getting into a little calmer state, and all fear of the rebels is over, unless the Americans should continue to aid and encourage them. The rebels having evacuated Navy Island, most of the troops have left that part of the frontier, and the volunteers have been allowed to return home. We have thus completely subdued the rebels, without having had *one soldier in the province.* While they had possession of Navy Island, our troops plied them pretty well with shells; and from the accounts our men received when they went there after the Americans had left, they had about 150 men killed. We have taken about 50 Yankees, 3 generals, and several captains; all of whom I hope will never see the Yankee land again. There must be some severe examples made, or we shall never be at peace.

A war-establishment of troops is now forming, in the expectation of some employment for them next summer.

It is impossible for any one not on the spot, and acquainted with the whole of the details of the extraordinary conduct of the Americans, to form any idea of the baseness and treachery both of the governors and governed in that *land of liberty*. Throughout the whole affair, the authorities in the States pretended to discountenance the conduct of their citizens, but secretly encouraged them; and even general Scott, whom the president sent to Buffalo with 3000 men to put down the Yankee mobs and arrest their leaders, took up his abode in the same house with General Van Ranseler, the man who stole the States cannon, and raised 800 men to take Navy Island.

The Yankees are still holding meetings and raising money and men for future operations against us; but theirs is a *free country*, and the laws are obeyed only when it suits their convenience or interest. Our "fair and fertile lands," as they call our province, have been laid out into 300 acre lots, for such aspiring Yankees as are disposed to signalize themselves in burning our towns and murdering the inhabitants, in order to free the country from such a *hateful yoke* as the English government. Jonathan, however, has got something to do before this is effected.

From all I see of the Americans and their government I feel persuaded that they will not hold together long. The mob has obtained a control over public characters, which all their institutions tend to increase; and the few intelligent and

honourable men amongst them have but little weight in guiding the machine of government. Those who figured as *leaders* in this rebellion, though farmers possessing from 500 to 1200 acres of land without incumbrance or drawback, as independent as any English yeoman on his own estate, are as ignorant as their horses about government, and their followers much below English farm-labourers. Nor were the Americans ever in a worse state for war than at this moment. The distress felt by the mercantile and monied interests has produced a great shock: and the people are so divided, that you would think, if you heard them talk of their government, they were living under a perfect despotism; and party-spirit is carried to such a pitch, as to disturb the social relations and embitter the intercourse of private life.

If there be any error in the government here, it is that it is too free, or rather that the necessary restraints on the evil disposed have not been sufficiently enforced. This will I have no doubt be remedied in future, but the neglect has placed us in a most perilous situation. It is possible we may again be called upon to leave our homes; and if so, it must be submitted to, for in such a case it becomes necessary for every one to do his utmost to put down brute force, bent upon pillage and murder. I hope every Englishman will join in heart with us, who have left the land of our birth under the faith of English protection.

FINIS.